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I would construe then: "For a [the] movent thing [which the soul of which we are speaking manifestly appeared to be] they conceived to be [of] the nature of first things—not without plausible reason. Whence some thought it to be fire." I do not myself think this construction in the context strained. But any harshness that others may feel in it is, I believe, amply justified by the allusion to Plato's *γένεσιν τὴν περὶ τὰ πρῶτα* and his insistence that soul and not matter has a right to the predicate *φύσις*. The *τε* need not trouble us. Two MSS omit it. If it is retained we may perhaps adopt Mr. Hicks's suggestion that it should be added to the passages where *τε γάρ* equals *etenim*.

Nothing is more characteristic of Aristotle than the use of Platonic distinctions for the relative justification of earlier thinkers against Plato's criticism even when at bottom he agrees with Plato rather than with them. Compare, for example, the entire treatment of *ἡδονή* in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Finally, Themistius' paraphrase seems to support the interpretation here proposed. Themistius says: οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅσοι τὸ κινεῖν τῆς ψυχῆς σύμφυτον δύναμιν ὑπενόησαν, εἰκότως καὶ οὗτοι συγγενῇ ταῖς ἀρχαῖς αὐτὴν ἀποφαίνονται. εὐλογον γὰρ καὶ λίαν πιθανὸν τὴν κινητικωτάτην αἰτίαν ἐν ταῖς πρώταις ἀρχαῖς κατατάττειν, ὅθεν ἔδοξέ τισιν ἐκ πυρὸς εἶναι μάλιστα ἡ ψυχὴ. This seems to imply the assumption of my interpretation that τὸ κινητικόν refers directly to soul as the subject of discourse.

PAUL SHOREY

## EXECUTION OF A VESTAL AND RITUAL MARRIAGE

When I was an undergraduate, the Sun-myth explanation of well-nigh all mythology and ritual had fairly run its course among the really learned, but its influences still held sway over our young enthusiasts who were just beginning to find in folk-lore something more charming than mere stories. When we finally learned to distrust the splendor of the Sun-myth as a universal illuminant, we turned to Herr Mannhardt, and then to Mr. Frazer, and derived new courage from the Corn-spirit. This all-powerful deity appears now to rule supreme. But to a layman in such abstrusities there seems danger lest the passion for comparison, for the detection of analogies, for uniform ritual interpretation of all possible human action, may be carried over into the realm of improbability and even of absurdity. I would not for a moment be understood to blaspheme against the Corn-spirit. On the contrary, I bow myself before him. Nor would I speak otherwise than most respectfully and gratefully of the diligence and ingenuity that have collected and are collecting masses of apparently cognate material from the traditions of vanished or vanishing peoples. I would merely ask with diffidence whether the Corn-spirit is not occasionally worked overtime nowadays, somewhat as the much-enduring Sun was a generation or two ago.

The immediate text of my note is a page or two of Miss J. E. Harrison's most interesting essay on "Sophokles' *Ichneutae*, etc.," in the volume of *Essays and Studies Presented to William Ridgeway* (pp. 144 ff.). The writer finds "in the fate that at Rome overtook the guilty Vestal, a ghastly counterpart that seems to have escaped notice" to the ritual of the *Mundus patet* (see Mr. Warde Fowler in *Journal of Roman Studies*, 1912, pp. 25 ff.). I have had occasion elsewhere to comment briefly on the story of the execution of an unchaste Vestal as narrated by the younger Pliny (*Ep.* iv. 11), but without any discussion of the ceremonial in its primitive ritual aspect. Miss Harrison discerns in the origin of the ceremonial a ritual marriage to secure fertility for the crops of the community. She cites as a quasi-parallel the rice-bride and rice-bridegroom of Java, and Kore's marriage to Plouton. The foundation of the argument in support of her interpretation may fairly be analyzed as follows: (1) the place constructed for the immurement was underground; (2) it was in the form of a dwelling, and had a bed prepared in it; (3) it was also provided with small quantities of the necessities of life, such as bread, water, milk, and oil, which Plutarch, in his description of the ceremonial (*Num.* 10), calls ἀπαρχαί. To add to the effect of the gruesome picture, and of course to the force of her argument, Miss Harrison writes, "Dread prayers were said presumably to the underworld daemons, hands were uplifted to the gods of the upper air in token of *devotio*, and then the chief priest," etc. But Plutarch, whom alone Miss Harrison can depend upon as authority in this matter, says merely ὁ δὲ τῶν ἱερῶν ἑξαρχος εὐχὰς τινὰς ἀπορρήτους ποιησάμενος καὶ χεῖρας ἀνατείνας θεοῖς πρὸ τῆς ἀνάγκης, κ.τ.λ. There is certainly no intimation here of any "dread prayers to the underworld daemons," nor of anything like the formula of a *devotio*, and Miss Harrison's purposeful coloring should be disregarded.

It seems likely, indeed, that the silent prayers offered by the chief pontiff were a deprecation for the purpose of averting from his own head, and that of the community, the possible wrath of a deity offended by the ἀνάγκη visited upon a priestess of such high sanctity. At any rate, the briefly mentioned prayers must be interpreted from the character of the rite (when that character is determined), not the rite in any degree from the prayers.

May I be permitted a brief examination of each of the three points on which Miss Harrison's argument appears to depend? In the first place, the cell of the Vestal's punishment was underground. Certainly: for it was a tomb, and early tombs were commonly underground (as, indeed, not infrequently were also early houses). Its situation, then, has a ritual significance only in so far as the subterranean location of all tombs may be shown to have a ritual significance. It is illogical to insist that such a natural generalization is wrong, and the underground position of this particular tomb must be interpreted in a specific and unique manner. In order to make such an argument reasonable it would be necessary to show that with this particular tomb were connected certain other characteristics that rendered

the general class-explanation inapplicable here, or at the very least not so readily applicable. But no such element of especial difficulty complicates the present case, and underground tombs in general have no ritual connection with marriage or with fertility.

The second point is that the cell was like a primitive house (Plutarch, indeed, calls it *κατάγειος οἶκος οὐ μέγας*, and later an *οἶκημα*), and was equipped with a bed. Certainly: for early tombs were very commonly regarded, constructed, and equipped to some extent as houses. A bed on which the corpse was laid is in some form or other a common feature of the house-tomb. It had a bed in it because it was a house, and houses have beds as one of the primitive articles of their equipment. But Miss Harrison appears to argue one moment that it was a house, and the next that it was a bride-chamber, also because it had a bed in it ("But why, if not for vengeance, was the Vestal buried? The couch buried with her is grim evidence"; then follows the reference to the rice-bridal, and to the wedding of Kore and Plouton). This is surely a quite insufficient item to serve for perfect identification. "The underground cell was a house, because it had a bed in it; and because it had a bed in it, it was a bride-chamber." To this form the argument appears fairly reducible, and the logical fallacy is perfectly evident.

What I have remarked under the first point concerning the unreasonableness of postulating an especial and unique explanation in the specific case, where the general or class-explanation appears amply to suffice, applies with double force to this second point. There is no possible reason other than in fancy for making over the house into a bride-chamber.

The third point is that the Vestal's house-bride-chamber-tomb was further provided with a scanty supply of such necessities of life as bread, water, milk, and oil; and Plutarch calls these *ἀραρχαί*. On the ritual meaning of this word Miss Harrison properly insists, seeing in it a reference to the seed-corn for the next year such as, according to Mr. Warde Fowler's suggestion, was stored over winter in the *mundus*. But while asserting the perfect ritual accuracy of Plutarch in this one detail of nomenclature, Miss Harrison rejects his statement of the reason for including these *ἀραρχαί* in the furnishing of the house-tomb. He says that it was because men shrank from destroying by hunger (presumably, therefore, a fortiori from destroying by violence) a person consecrated to the highest and holiest of rites. Miss Harrison remarks on this that "by Plutarch's time their meaning was lost; they were just bits of food given to the victim that the pollution of murder might be avoided."

It is certainly true that a ritual act may in the course of centuries lose its real significance, at any rate in popular if not also in scientific interpretation, and acquire an altogether different one. In such a case the new explanation is likely to be based upon a more practical and commonplace aspect of the surviving rite. More than one instance of this sort may be cited from

Christian ritual. For example, in the Roman Mass the priest, after the Consecration, genuflects before the Sacred Host, and then lifts it higher than his head, so that it may be plainly seen by the congregation. This "Elevation of the Host" has been usually explained for some centuries past as done for the purpose of adoration by the people; the rubric also appears so to indicate; but some of the best Roman and other liturgists believe it to be the liturgical remnant in manual act of a true oblation, which exists at this place in early Eastern, as it does also (by restoration) in the Scottish and American liturgies, but was lost from the Roman at some time in the early Middle Ages. Here, then, is an excellent example of a ritual act that has lost its primitive and real significance, and taken on quite a different one. If only it were yet technically called in the liturgy an oblation, while still otherwise explained, the parallelism to Plutarch's misunderstanding of the rite he describes would be even more perfect.

I find, then, no trouble with Miss Harrison's challenge of the accuracy of Plutarch's interpretation of the ceremonial that he describes, though I am unable to agree with her upon the substitute that she would adopt in its place—this for the reasons, convincing, as they appear to me, that I have set down. But if her explanation is to be rejected, her point about the ritual meaning of ἀραρχαί must at any rate be dealt with. That, indeed, appears to me to be the only real basis of her entire argument. I quite agree that in calling ἀραρχαί the pitiful bits of bread, water, milk, oil, and the like that were supplied in the Vestal's tomb-house, Plutarch is using a ritual term, and using it properly. But I should be inclined to seek for the true interpretation of the term along a simpler and more direct path than that followed by Miss Harrison, and one that I think involves no obstacles. It does not bring in any inconsequent ideas of ritual sacrifice or ritual marriage.

The Vestal had been protected in her sanctity from time immemorial by a powerful tabu. No person was allowed to use even a show of violence toward her. Only the *pontifex maximus*, as representing the *pater familias* of the community as a whole, seems to have been exempt from the tabu, at least in early days. It is reported (Plut. *loc. cit.*) that he might punish by scourging the Vestal who had committed a minor fault. This duty he must perform with his own hands, and not delegate to another. Dionysius says (i. 78) that in the early days an unchaste Vestal was beaten to death with rods, "though now the pontifical laws direct that they be buried alive." If his statement of the usage in the early period be true, doubtless we must understand that the *pontifex maximus* himself had to carry out the penalty, which was the same as that which continued to be the fate of her male accomplice throughout later times. Dionysius is also authority (ix. 40) for the statement that in the consulship of L. Pinarius and P. Furius (472 B.C.) the pontiffs scourged and then buried alive a certain Vestal Urbina whom they found guilty of unchastity. The immediate conjunction of the two penalties

suggests an approximation to the practice in ordinary criminal cases, where scourging was a usual preliminary to the carrying out of a death sentence. But from this preliminary scourging women (as well as some other persons) had been or became at various times exempt, and it is perhaps more reasonable to believe that the scourging of Urbinia had nothing to do with her capital sentence, but, if inflicted at all, was for an earlier and lesser fault; unless, indeed, the very early date assigned to the event points to a period before such exemptions were established. Nor is there trouble from the mention of the pontiffs, rather than of their chief only, since the college acted as a *consilium* for its head (cf. Plin. *Ep.* iv. 11. 6f.). At the time of Domitian, then, the tabu was in some points more strict than in the early days. An erring Vestal could no longer be scourged to death. It would appear also that she could not be formally deprived of the necessities of life, like one interdicted from fire and water, and she must have the freedom of the house to which the *pontifex maximus* assigned her service. In the case of a death sentence, then, a "house" was constructed underground *ad hoc*, and formally furnished by direction of the chief pontiff, and in this the unfettered Vestal was immured. It is worth noting that this "house" was not built outside the walls, as were tombs, but just inside. It is also much worth noting that included in the furnishing was, according to Plutarch, a burning lamp. Miss Harrison ignores this item, for her theory depends upon the presence only of the bed and the ἀπαρχαί. The addition of the lamp may conceivably be even an embarrassment to her view. I of course note that in the Javanese ceremony a lamp is included in the furnishing of the "bridal chamber." But in that instance of an indubitable ritual marriage, the other furnishings of the apartment are a mat and "all kinds of toilet articles," the ordinary equipment, that is, of a sleeping-room. There is nothing like the ἀπαρχαί, and the lamp of the Javanese bed-chamber cannot reasonably be connected with the lamp of the Vestal's house-tomb, which must evidently be explained in strict logical relation to the food and drink as well as to the bed. I venture to suggest that as the place of the Vestal's entombment is a ritual family dwelling, the furnishing of it is a ritual furnishing. It includes a bed, fire, water, and food. Each of these objects has a ritual significance under other circumstances as well.

Plutarch accordingly appears to be entirely accurate in using the ritual term ἀπαρχαί; for samples of the primitive simple foods are here used for a ritual purpose and in a ritual sense, though that sense is of formal house-furnishing, and has nothing to do here with any idea of sacrifice. Plutarch's only error was perhaps as might have been expected, in his interpretation. He probably reports the popular view of his day, that the provision of the ἀπαρχαί was due to a motive of formal piety—or perhaps we should say of formal humanity. I do not feel at all sure, however, that this was the pontifical view. It is, indeed, not inconceivable that the formalized Roman conscience might be satisfied by a miserable triviality like this, but the ritual

suggestions of the whole matter are too strong to be disregarded in favor of Plutarch's humanitarian explanation as the original one.

I am tempted to add a few more considerations that create difficulty, as I think, for Miss Harrison's theory in general, quite apart from questions connected with her detailed argument that I have already discussed. That criminals may be dedicated to the baleful deities of the underworld, and sent below the earth, to free the community from the danger that emanates from their presence, is well known. That chastity, and especially virginity, may be dedicated to a god in marriage or otherwise, is also well known. But what sort of a deity is so complacent as to be made especially propitious to the community, and insure it good crops, through the complimentary proffer in marriage of a daughter of the household who has compromised her virginity already with another, and has become *ipso facto* an outcast? Ritual purification by exclusion of the unworthy is one thing, but this seems quite different. It is a positive act of propitiation, not a negative one of protection. Can such a ritual marriage as Miss Harrison unnecessarily postulates be paralleled?

Moreover, the Roman view of the matter cannot lightly be thrown aside. According to it, the unchastity of a Vestal brought down upon the state the wrath of the offended gods, which showed itself in great public calamities, and could be appeased only by the detection and punishment of the offending priestess. This is asserted by Dionysius in as early a case as that of Urbina; it is intimated by Pliny in as late an instance as that of Cornelia. The community must be purified from pollution by the death of the sinner. That notion is in harmonious accord with all else that we know of early Roman ritual beliefs and practices. Only most powerful opposing proofs should lead us to reject it, and these have not been, and, I venture to say, cannot be advanced. Furthermore, rites for the insuring of good crops are generally by their nature annual affairs. The unchastity of a Vestal, though a considerable number of instances are recorded, was on the whole a rare event. It was a *prodigium* to be expiated. How could such an infrequent horror have been regarded or treated as having anything conceivably to do with the regular yearly return of seedtime and harvest?

It may be remarked incidentally that Miss Harrison strangely misunderstands Plutarch's *ἐν ᾗ τις ἔστιν ἐντὸς τῆς πόλεως ὀφρὺς γεώδης παρατίνοσα πύργος· καλεῖται δὲ χώμα διαλέκτῳ τῇ Λατίνων*. The reference is of course to no small local mound, but to the Servian *agger*, which extended all the way from the Colline to the Esquiline gate. In, or into, the inner hill-side slope of this rampart, and near the Colline gate, the Vestal's tomb was excavated.

E. T. M.